

REMARKS

Summary of the Office Action

Claims 1-7 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,102,709 to *Howard et al.* in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,784,679 to *Sweet et al.*

Claim 8 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over *Howard et al.* in view of *Sweet et al.* in further view of U.S. Patent No. 6,037,787 to *Corwith*.

Summary of the Response to the Office Action

Applicants respectfully traverse all rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a).

Information Disclosure Statement

Applicants submitted an Information Disclosure Statement on July 27, 2006. Applicants thank the Examiner for acknowledging the Information Disclosure Statement by initialing the PTO 1449 form and returning a copy to Applicants.

All Claims Recite Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 1-7 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over *Howard et al.* in view of *Sweet et al.* Claim 8 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over *Howard et al.* in view of *Sweet et al.* in further view of *Corwith*. Applicants respectfully traverse all rejections for at least the following reasons.

The Office has not established a *prima facie* case of obviousness at least because there is no suggestion or motivation to combine *Howard et al.* and *Sweet et al.* To establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness, there must be some suggestion or motivation, either in the references themselves or in the knowledge generally available to one of ordinary skill in the art, to combine

reference teachings. MPEP §§ 2142-2143.

While the Office acknowledges that *Howard et al.* “fails to disclose a conductive pipe and an outer periphery of a part of the pipe directly opposes an interior part wall of the through hole while forming an air gap there between,” the Office alleges that it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art, at the time the invention was made, to modify *Howard et al.* with the teachings of *Sweet et al.* “for the purpose of having space to insert a spring in order to retract the plungers and make better contact with the IC.” Paragraph 3. Applicants respectfully disagree.

Howard et al. discloses wire bundles 76 and 86, as shown in FIG. 1. As *Howard et al.* discloses wire bundles 76 and 86 without the claimed “air gap,” as admitted by the Office, Applicants respectfully submit that one of ordinary skill would not have been motivated to combine the teachings of *Howard et al.* and *Sweet et al.* “for the purpose of having space to insert a spring in order to retract the plungers and make better contact with the IC,” as alleged by the Office.

Moreover, the gap 214 disclosed by *Sweet et al.* is not “for the purpose of having space to insert a spring in order to retract the plungers and make better contact with the IC,” as alleged by the Office. Contrary to the Office’s contention, the gap 214 “is maintained between the central body 216 and the conductive tube 218 to provide electrical isolation.” Col. 3, lines 10-12. As the wire bundles 76 and 86 of *Howard et al.* are disposed within body member 70 and bottom body 80, both of which are formed from a dielectric material such as Teflon, one of ordinary skill would not have been motivated to combine the teachings of *Howard et al.* and *Sweet et al.* to provide “electrical isolation.” Col. 31-35 and 66-67.

As such, the suggestion or motivation to combine is not provided by either the references themselves or by knowledge generally available to one of ordinary skill in the art. Thus, the rejection of claim 1 should be withdrawn. Furthermore, claims 2-8 depend from independent claim 1. Accordingly, dependent claims 2-8 are also allowable for at least the reasons stated above.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and the timely allowance of the pending claims. Should the Examiner feel that there are any issues outstanding after consideration of this response, the Examiner is invited to contact the Applicants' undersigned representative to expedite prosecution.

If there are any other fees due in connection with the filing of this paper, please charge the fees to our Deposit Account No. 50-0310. If a fee is required for an extension of time under 37 C.F.R. § 1.136 not accounted for above, such an extension is requested and the fee should also be charged to our Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,

MORGAN, LEWIS & BOCKIUS LLP

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By: Mary Jane Boswell
Mary Jane Boswell
Reg. No. 33,652

CUSTOMER NO. 009629
MORGAN, LEWIS & BOCKIUS LLP
1111 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20004
Tel: 202-739-3000
Fax: 202-739-3100